Case 2:09-cv-07656-DDP-OP Document 1	Filed 10/21/09 Page 1 of 17 Page ID #:1 FILED
	CLERK U.S DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DIST. OF CALIF. LOS ANGELES BY S DISTRICT COURT ICT OF CALIFORNIA
TRACY CARTER; ENMA DELEON; JACKIE GENTRY; GRACE LERIGET; GLENDA MEDLOCK; MIRIAM MENDOZA; NICOLE MERCIER; MICHELLE MINJAREZ; and PABLO SANCHEZ, Plaintiffs, vs. COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS; MIKE CHOLOKIAN; and DOES 1 through 10, Defendants.	COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF 1. Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution; 42 U.S.C. § 1983; 2. California Constitution Art. I, § 1; 3. Common Law Invasion of Privacy 4. Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL
	Anne Richardson, Esq. [S.B. #151541] Radhika Sainath, Esq. [S.B. #259318] HADSELL STORMER KEENY RICHARDSON AND RENICK LLP 128 North Fair Oaks Avenue Pasadena, California 91103-3664 Telephone: (626) 585-9600 Facsimile: (626) 577-7079 Attorneys for Plaintiffs UNITED STATES CENTRAL DISTRICATION TRACY CARTER; ENMA DELEON; JACKIE GENTRY; GRACE LERIGET; GLENDA MEDLOCK; MIRIAM MENDOZA; NICOLE MERCIER; MICHELLE MINJAREZ; and PABLO SANCHEZ, Plaintiffs, vs. COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS; MIKE CHOLOKIAN; and DOES 1 through 10,

Complaint.Dispatchers.Final.wpd

INTRODUCTION

1. Plaintiffs Tracy Carter, Enma DeLeon, Jackie Gentry, Grace Leriget, Glenda Medlock, Miriam Mendoza, Nicole Mercier, Michelle Minjarez and Pablo Sanchez worked for dispatchers for the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. In October 2008, the County secretly installed a hidden camera in the dispatch room where plaintiffs work, eat and change their clothes. For approximately three months, the County captured plaintiffs on videotape in various states of undress and other private activities. Defendants' actions constitute a grievous violation of the right to privacy guaranteed by the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and state common law for which plaintiffs are entitled to general, exemplary and punitive damages.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question), 28 U.S.C. §1343 (civil rights) and 28 U.S.C. § 1367 (supplemental jurisdiction). Venue is proper in the Central District of California under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) in that the wrongs alleged herein occurred within the County of Los Angeles, within the Central District.

PARTIES

- 3. PLAINTIFFS Tracy Carter, Enma DeLeon, Jackie Gentry, Grace Leriget, Glenda Medlock, Miriam Mendoza, Nicole Mercier, Michelle Minjarez and Pablo Sanchez ("Plaintiffs") are, and were, at all times relevant, residents of Los Angeles County or San Bernardino County. At all times relevant, PLAINTIFFS were employees of the Department of Public Works. PLAINTIFFS all performed work as dispatchers in Information Technology Division's dispatch room.
- 4. PLAINTIFF TRACY CARTER is a Dispatcher with the Department of Public Works. Upon information and belief, Ms. Carter appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.
 - 5. PLAINTIFF ENMA DELEON is a Dispatcher with the Department of

Public Works. Upon information and belief, Ms. DeLeon appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.

- 6. PLAINTIFF JACKIE GENTRY is a Dispatcher with the Department of Public Works. Upon information and belief, Ms. Gentry appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.
- 7. PLAINTIFF GRACE LERIGET worked as a Dispatcher with the Department of Public Works. Upon information and belief, Ms. Leriget appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.
- 8. PLAINTIFF GLENDA MEDLOCK is a Dispatcher with the Department of Public Works. Upon information and belief, Medlock appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.
- 9. PLAINTIFF MIRIAM MENDOZA worked as a Dispatcher with the Department of Public Works. Upon information and belief, Ms. Mendoza appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.
- 10. PLAINTIFF NICOLE MERCIER worked as a Dispatcher with the Department of Public Works. Upon information and belief, Ms. Mercier appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.
- 11. PLAINTIFF MICHELLE MINJAREZ is a Dispatcher with the Department of Public Works. Upon information and belief, Ms. Minjarez appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.
- 12. PLAINTIFF PABLO "PAUL" SANCHEZ is a Dispatcher with the Department of Public Works. Upon information and belief, Mr. Sanchez appears on the videotapes secretly recorded by defendants in the dispatch room of the Department of Public Works.
 - 13. Defendant COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES was and is a legal political entity

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established under the laws of the State of California, with all the powers specified and necessarily implied by the Constitution and the laws of the State of California and exercised by a duly elected Board of Supervisors and/or their agents and officers. At all times relevant herein for all purposes connected with management of the Department of Public Works, defendant County of Los Angeles acted directly through Building Manager Mike Cholokian and Does 1 through 10 inclusive.

- 14. DEFENDANT LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ("DPW") is a subdivision and agency of the County of Los Angeles. The DPW is an operating department of the County and charged with the responsibility of providing effective public works services for the County of Los Angeles.
- 15. DEFENDANT MIKE CHOLOKIAN was at all times relevant a Building Manager for the Department of Public Works. Mike Cholokian is sued individually and in his official capacities.
- 16. DEFENDANT DOES 1 through 10, ("DOES") inclusive, are not known or identified at this time. On information and belief, PLAINTIFFS allege that each DOE is in some manner responsible for the wrongs alleged herein, and that each such defendant advised, encouraged, participated in, ratified, directed or conspired to do the wrongful acts alleged herein. When the true names and capacities of said defendants become known, plaintiffs will seek relief to amend this Complaint to show their true identities in place of their fictitious names as DOES 1 through 10.

FACTS COMMON TO ALL CLAIMS

- Plaintiffs have at all times relevant to this complaint been employees 17. of the defendant County.
- 18. On approximately October 9, 2008, the County secretly installed a hidden surveillance camera in the Los Angeles Department of Public Works Information Technology Division's Dispatch Room (the "dispatch room").
- The surveillance camera was concealed in a smoke detector in the ceiling of 19. the dispatch room. The surveillance camera was connected to a video tape recorder

located outside the dispatch room.

- 20. The camera was installed under the supervision and authority of individuals in Human Resources: Mike Cholokian, the Building Manager; and Isaac Gindi, Information Technology Department Division Chief. The camera recorded plaintiffs while they worked, changed and engaged in other private activity in the dispatch room.
- 21. Prior to the discovery of the camera, plaintiffs believed that the dispatch room was private and not subject to monitoring by anyone. Plaintiffs reasonably believed that they could not be seen by anyone who was not in the dispatch room at the time. Plaintiffs conducted themselves accordingly by using the dispatch room to change clothes, engage in personal phone calls, and the like.
- 22. The dispatch room is staffed twenty-four hours a day with dispatchers who handle emergency calls. Dispatchers who work after-hours are not permitted to leave the room other than to use the restroom. The dispatch room has assigned lockers where dispatchers may store their belongings, and a small kitchen area with a fridge so that dispatchers may eat during their shifts without leaving the room.
- 23. The dispatch room is not open to members of the public and is accessible by door with an electronic lock. The door automatically locks every weekday at 5:00 p.m. and is locked every weekend. During the swing/graveyard shift (from about 5:15 p.m. until about 6:00 a.m.), there is typically only one dispatcher working in the dispatch room. At other times, there are anywhere from two to four dispatchers working in the dispatch room.
- 24. When plaintiffs worked in the dispatch room, particularly when they worked alone on the swing/graveyard shift, they often engaged in private activities. These activities included changing their clothes at the beginning or end of their shifts. When plaintiffs worked alone in the dispatch room, they believed that their activities were not being observed by anyone.
- 25. On approximately December 11, 2008 dispatcher Amber Richards discovered the hidden surveillance camera inside of the smoke detector. She asked

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maintenance to remove the camera. The following day, she called the police to report that she found a hidden camera.

- 26. On December 16, 2008, plaintiffs filed a union grievance regarding the camera.
- 27. On December 23, 2008, Ms. Richards was called into Human Resources and interrogated about various topics that apparently had been seen while she was being recorded by the hidden camera.
- 28. Plaintiffs have at all times relevant to this action conducted themselves in a manner consistent with an actual expectation of privacy in the dispatch room. The plaintiffs at no time consented or waived their expectation of privacy.
- 29. The defendants, in committing the acts complained of herein, acted pursuant to a policy, practice or custom of the County of Los Angeles. At all times, the defendants were aware, or should have been aware, of their acts were in violation of the law.
- 30. At all times relevant to this action, the defendants acted without legal justification in installing the camera and/or in the scope of the video recording.
- 31. By reason of the aforementioned acts of defendants, plaintiffs suffered anxiety, anguish, humiliation, and emotional distress, in an amount according to proof.
- 32. Defendants Mike Cholokian and Does 1-10 acted despicably, with the intent to harm, oppress and deprive plaintiffs of their rights under the United States and California Constitutions, and the common law right to privacy entitling plaintiffs to punitive damages in an amount to be proven at trial.
- 33. Plaintiffs are entitled to an award of reasonable attorneys' fees as allowed by law, including, without limitation, under 42 U.S.C. § 1988 and California Code of Civil Procedure § 1021.5.
- 34. Plaintiffs filed tort claims against all Defendants, under California Government Code § 900 *et seq.* with the County of Los Angeles on June 9, 2009 alleging violations of the law right to privacy. By letter dated June 19, 2009, the County rejected

the claims for activities occurring before December 9, 2009 on the grounds that the claims were filed more than 6 months after they occurred. However, as alleged herein, plaintiffs did not discover the hidden camera until December 10, 2008, and their claims accrued as of that date. The County is still investigating claims for conduct on or after December 10, 2009 and has not yet issued a notice of denial.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution; 42 U.S.C. § 1983 (Plaintiffs v. All Defendants)

- 35. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate herein all the allegations in the preceding paragraphs.
- 36. Plaintiffs had a reasonable expectation of privacy while engaged in regular and usual conduct for a private dispatch room, in that they reasonably believed that they were free from observation by those not present in the dispatch room and were not subject to video surveillance or recording. Plaintiffs' privacy interest is one recognized by the relative customs of the time and place, the occupation of the plaintiffs and the habits of society.
- 37. Plaintiffs also had a subjective expectation of privacy while engaged in regular and usual conduct for a dispatch room after hours, in that they each believed that they were free from observation by those not present in the dispatch room and were not subject to video surveillance or recording.
- 38. Defendants, by installing video surveillance in the dispatch room and secretly recording video images of plaintiffs as alleged herein, violated the plaintiffs' right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures under the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution, and are therefore liable to plaintiffs under 42 U.S.C. § 1983.
- 39. The conduct complained of herein was undertaken pursuant to the policies, practices and customs of the Los Angeles Department of Public Works, an agency of the County of Los Angeles, and was sanctioned and approved by each of the

individual named defendants, including the Doe defendants.

- 40. Defendants, acting under color of state law and through their policies, practices and customs, deprived plaintiffs of rights, privileges, and immunities secured by the Constitution and laws of the United States under the Fourth Amendment, by subjecting them, or through their deliberate indifference allowing others to subject them to unreasonable searches and seizures.
- 41. As a result of the aforementioned acts, plaintiffs were injured as set forth above and are entitled to compensatory damages against all Defendants.
- 42. Defendants Mike Cholokian and Does 1-10 acted despicably, with the intent to harm, oppress and deprive plaintiffs of their rights under the United States and California Constitutions, and the common law right to privacy entitling plaintiffs to punitive damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

California Constitution Art. I, § 1

(Plaintiffs v. All Defendants)

- 43. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate herein all the allegations in the preceding paragraphs.
- 44. Plaintiffs maintained at all times relevant to this action, a specific, legally protected privacy interest. That interest is to be free from invasions of privacy, including secret video monitoring and recording, while engaged in conduct usual and regular for a private dispatch room.
- 45. Plaintiffs had a reasonable expectation of privacy while engaged in regular and usual conduct for a dispatch room, in that they reasonably believed that they were free from observation by those not present in the dispatch room and were not subject to video surveillance or recording. Plaintiffs' privacy interest is one recognized by the relative customs of the time and place, the occupation of the plaintiffs and the habits of society.
 - 46. The defendants' conduct, as alleged herein, constitutes an egregious breach

of social norms underlying the privacy right and a serious invasion of plaintiffs' privacy.

- 47. Defendants, by installing video surveillance in the dispatch room and secretly recording video images of plaintiffs, including some images of plaintiffs in ranging states of undress as alleged herein, invaded said privacy right as protected by the Constitution of the State of California, Article I, Section 1.
- 48. As a result of the aforementioned acts, plaintiffs were injured as set forth above and are entitled to compensatory damages against all Defendants.
- 49. Defendants Mike Cholokian and Does 1-10 acted despicably, with the intent to harm, oppress and deprive plaintiffs of their rights under the United States and California Constitutions, and the common law right to privacy entitling plaintiffs to punitive damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

Common Law Invasion of Privacy (Plaintiffs v. All Defendants)

- 50. Plaintiffs re-allege and incorporate herein all the allegations in the preceding paragraphs.
- 51. Plaintiffs had a reasonable expectation of privacy while engaged in regular and usual conduct for a dispatch room, in that they reasonably believed that they were free from observation by those not present in the dispatch room and were not subject to video surveillance or recording. Plaintiffs' privacy interest is one recognized by the relative customs of the time and place, the occupation of the plaintiffs and the habits of society.
- 52. Plaintiffs have a right to avoid disclosure of confidential personal information, including the surveillance of said plaintiffs while in ranging states of undress, and to be free from invasions of said right, while engaged in conduct regular and usual for a dispatch room.
- 53. Defendants' actions were unreasonable and highly offensive to the plaintiffs, and to the senses of ordinary persons. Defendants' conduct contravenes all

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boundaries of decency and standards of a civilized society.

- Defendants, by installing video surveillance in the dispatch room and secretly recording video images of plaintiffs as alleged herein, invaded plaintiffs' right to privacy and intruded upon plaintiffs' private matters and are therefore liable to plaintiffs under the laws of the State of California.
- 55. As a result of the aforementioned acts, plaintiffs were injured as set forth above and are entitled to compensatory damages against all Defendants.
- 56. Defendants Mike Cholokian and Does 1-10 acted despicably, with the intent to harm, oppress and deprive plaintiffs of their rights under the United States and California Constitutions, and the common law right to privacy entitling plaintiffs to punitive damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

(Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress)

(Plaintiffs v. All Defendants)

- 57. Defendants' conduct was extreme and outrageous, and caused plaintiffs to sustain emotional distress.
- Defendants acted with reckless disregard of the probability that 58. plaintiffs would suffer emotional distress.
- As a result of the aforementioned acts, plaintiffs were injured as set forth 59. above and are entitled to compensatory damages against all Defendants.
- 60. Defendants Mike Cholokian and Does 1-10 acted despicably, with the intent to harm, oppress and deprive plaintiffs of their rights under the United States and California Constitutions, and the common law right to privacy entitling plaintiffs to punitive damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, plaintiffs pray for the following relief:

1. General, special, and compensatory damages against all Defendants according to proof;

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DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff hereby demands a jury trial on all issues so triable.

DATED: October 21, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

HADSELL, STORMER, KEENY,

RICHARDSON & RENICK LLP.

By Radhika Sainath Attorneys for Plaintiffs

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

NOTICE OF ASSIGNMENT TO UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE FOR DISCOVERY

This case has been assigned to District Judge Dean D. Pregerson and the assigned discovery Magistrate Judge is Charles Eick.

The case number on all documents filed with the Court should read as follows:

CV09- 7656 DDP (Ex)

Pursuant to General Order 05-07 of the United States District Court for the Central District of California, the Magistrate Judge has been designated to hear discovery related

1	notions.	_			·
1	All discovery related motions	shou	ald be noticed on the calendar	of th	e Magistrate Judge
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			NOTICE TO COUNSEL		
	ppy of this notice must be served w I, a copy of this notice must be serv		e summons and complaint on all det n all plaintiffs).	^f endar	nts (if a removal action is
Sub	sequent documents must be filed a	at the	following location:		
[X]	Western Division 312 N. Spring St., Rm. G-8 Los Angeles, CA 90012	Ц	Southern Division 411 West Fourth St., Rm. 1-053 Santa Ana, CA 92701-4516	Ц	Eastern Division 3470 Twelfth St., Rm. 134 Riverside, CA 92501

Failure to file at the proper location will result in your documents being returned to you.

Anne Richardson, Esq. [S.B. #151541] Radhika Sainath, Esq. [S.B. #259318] HADSELL STORMER KEENY RICHARDSON AND RENICK LLP 128 North Fair Oaks Avenue Pasadena, California 91103-3664



	I			
	DISTRICT COURT CT OF CALIFORNIA			
TRACY CARTER; et al. [See attached]	CASE NUMBER			
PLAINTIFF(S) v. COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES	CV09 07656 DDP (EX)			
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS; MIKE CHOLOKIAN; and DOES 1 through 10, DEFENDANT(S).	SUMMONS			
A lawsuit has been filed against you.	2 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. The answer ne Richardson/Radhika Sainath , whose address is ks Ave.#204, PasadenaCA 91103 . If you fail to do so			

CV-01A (12/07)

60 days by Rule 12(a)(3)].

SUMMONS

[Use 60 days if the defendant is the United States or a United States agency, or is an officer or employee of the United States. Allowed

SUMMONS ATTACHMENT

PLAINTIFFS

TRACY CARTER; ENMA DELEON; JACKIE GENTRY; GRACE LERIGET; GLENDA MEDLOCK; MIRIAM MENDOZA; NICOLE MERCIER; MICHELLE MINJAREZ; and PABLO SANCHEZ,

PLAINTIFF(S)

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA CIVIL COVER SHEET

I (a) PLAINTIFFS (Check box if you are representing yourself □) TRACY CARTER; ENMA DELEON; JACKIE GENTRY; GRACE LERIGE: GLENDA MEDLOCK; MIRIAM MENDOZA; NICOLE MERCIER; MICHELLE MINJAREZ; and PABLO SANCHEZ				DEFENDANTS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS; MIKE CHOLOKIAN; and DOES 1 through 10						
(b) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address and Telephone Number. If you are representing yourself, provide same.)				Attorneys	(If Known)					
Anne Richardson, Esq. [Hadsell Stormer Keeny Pasadena, CA 91103, (6										
II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION	ON (Place an X in one box only.)				PRINCIPAL PAR' x for plaintiff and c		For Diversity Case lefendant.)	s Only		
☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff ☑ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)			Citizen of This S	PTF DEF PTF DEF						
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IV. ORIGIN (Place an X in or	ved from □3 Remanded from		einstated or 5 copened	Transferr	ed from another dis	strict (sp	Dist	rict J	appeal to l udge from Magistrate	1
V. REQUESTED IN COMP	LAINT: JURY DEMAND: 🗹	Yes □	No (Check 'Yes'	only if de	manded in complai	nt.)				
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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Case Number: CV09 07656

AFTER COMPLETING THE FRONT SIDE OF FORM CV-71, COMPLETE THE INFORMATION REQUESTED BELOW.

CV-71 (05/08)

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA CIVIL COVER SHEET

VIII(a). IDENTICAL CASES: If yes, list case number(s):	Has this action been p	reviously filed in this cour	t and dismissed, remanded or closed? ♥No □ Yes				
VIII(b). RELATED CASES: HI yes, list case number(s):	lave any cases been pr	eviously filed in this court	that are related to the present case? VNo Yes				
	A. Arise from the sam B. Call for determinat C. For other reasons w	ne or closely related transa- tion of the same or substan would entail substantial du	ctions, happenings, or events; or tially related or similar questions of law and fact; or plication of labor if heard by different judges; or ght, and one of the factors identified above in a, b or c also is present.				
IX. VENUE: (When completing	•	,	•,				
(a) List the County in this District Check here if the government	ct; California County of t, its agencies or emplo	outside of this District; Sta	te if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH named plaintiff resides. If this box is checked, go to item (b).				
County in this District:*			California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Country				
Los Angeles County adn San	Bernardino County						
			te if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH named defendant resides. If this box is checked, go to item (c).				
County in this District:*			California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Country				
Los Angeles County							
(c) List the County in this District Note: In land condemnation			te if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH claim arose.				
County in this District:*		÷	California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Country				
Los Angeles County							
* Los Angeles, Orange, San Bern Note: In land condemnation cases,			r San Luis Obispo Counties				
X. SIGNATURĖ OF ATTORNEY	(OR PRO PER):		Date October 21, 2009				
or other papers as required by l	aw. This form, approv	ed by the Judicial Confere	formation contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings not of the United States in September 1974, is required pursuant to Local Rule 3-1 is not filed itating the civil docket sheet. (For more detailed instructions, see separate instructions sheet.)				
Key to Statistical codes relating to	Social Security Cases:						
Nature of Suit Code	e Abbreviation	Substantive Statement	of Cause of Action				
861	HIA	All claims for health insurance benefits (Medicare) under Title 18, Part A, of the Social Security Act, as amended. Also, include claims by hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, etc., for certification as providers of services under the program. (42 U.S.C. 1935FF(b))					
862	BL	All claims for "Black Lung" benefits under Title 4, Part B, of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969. (30 U.S.C. 923)					
863	DIWC	All claims filed by insured workers for disability insurance benefits under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended; plus all claims filed for child's insurance benefits based on disability. (42 U.S.C. 405(g))					
863	DIWW	All claims filed for widows or widowers insurance benefits based on disability under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended. (42 U.S.C. 405(g))					
864	SSID	All claims for suppleme Act, as amended.	ntal security income payments based upon disability filed under Title 16 of the Social Security				
865	RSI	All claims for retirement (old age) and survivors benefits under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended. (42 U.S.C. (g))					

CV-71 (05/08) CIVIL COVER SHEET Page 2 of 2